



SRMUN Atlanta 2014
***Revitalizing “An Agenda for Peace”: Preventative Diplomacy,
Conflict Resolution, and the Making of Peace in Our Time Movement***
November 20-22, 2014

Honorable Delegates,

Welcome to the Southern Regional Model United Nations (SRMUN) Atlanta 2014 Conference and the League of Arab States (LAS). I, along with my marvelous Assistant Director, Jared Cannon, will make up your dais for the LAS. I am very excited to spend my fourth, and Jared's first, SRMUN conference on staff with this committee, hoping to make this a conference you will not only remember, but will walk away from with a greater appreciation and understanding of the issues facing the Arab world.

The League of Arab States is a regional body designed to strengthen relationships between Arabic countries. Created in March of 1945, the LAS was fashioned “out of concern for the cementing and reinforcing of these bonds on the basis of respect for the independence and sovereignty of theme Stated, and in order to direct their efforts towards the goal of welfare of all the Arab States.” There are currently 22 Member States of the LAS, each of which participate in the various summits and councils within the LAS.

Keeping in mind the theme of SRMUN Atlanta 2014, we have chosen the following topics to discuss at this year's conference for the crucial role they each play in preventing conflict and helping create peace and stability:

- I: Ensuring Access to Political Processes in Conflict Situations
- II: Strengthening and Expanding Arab Economies: Encouragement of International Trade Relations

This background guide will serve as the foundation for your research, yet it should not be the extent of the research. Preparation is given to each topic to help guide delegates in their initial research, and to serve as a starting place for more in depth studies. It is expected that delegates go beyond this background guide in preparation for their position paper and to better prepare themselves for contribution within the committee in November. Further, each delegation is required to submit a position paper for consideration.

Position papers are to be no longer than two pages in length (single spaced) and should demonstrate your delegation's position, policies and recommendations on both topics. Further information regarding position papers can be found on the SRMUN website (<http://www.srmun.org>). **All Position papers MUST be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, October 31, 2014, via the online submission system on the SRMUN website.**

Both Jared and I are excited for the opportunity to serve as your dais for the League of Arab States during the SRMUN's 25th anniversary in Atlanta. I wish you all the best of luck in your conference preparation and look forward to meeting and working with each of you. Should questions arise as you begin to prepare for this conference, contacting those on your dais is always encouraged.

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The Committee History of the League of Arab States

A historic meeting took place in Cairo, Egypt in 1945. Dignitaries and diplomats from the Kingdom of Egypt, Transjordan, the Kingdom of Iraq, the Kingdom of Yemen, the Lebanese Republic, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Republic signed into effect the Pact of the League of Arab States (also called the Charter of the Arab League), outlining the duties and responsibilities of each Member State. The League of Arab States was effectively born on 22 March 1945 with the ratification of the Pact.¹

The idea of a regional Arab body came out of the Second World War in which the British supported a pan-Arab movement to address and support the concerns of the region.² It would not be until 1944, however, that Arab states began to move towards a true regional structure with the Alexandria Protocol, a document that would become the basis for the creation and realization of the League of Arab States. The Alexandria Protocol states that the *Council of the League of Arab States* shall be charged to "strengthen the relations between those states; to coordinate their political plans so as to insure their cooperation, and protect their independence and sovereignty against every aggression by suitable means."³ This statement remains the League's mission to this day.

The LAS, since its inception, has played a critical role in backing Palestinian statehood, and as such the League regards Palestine as an independent state with full authority in Arab League matters.⁴ The issue of Palestine has been central to the League of Arab States since the Alexandria Protocol⁵ and has retained a unique status within the League discussions. Member States have been active in uniting, at times, for the common interest of the Palestinian Diaspora, anti-settlement projects in the Occupied Territories, Palestinian nation building, and security concerns in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. Notably, the LAS produced the *Arab League Declaration on the Invasion of Palestine* on 15 May 1948, outlining League and Member States efforts to halt the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine and initiated an economic boycott of Israel which lasted over 40 years.⁶

The Arab League is a voluntary association consisting of Member States in the Arab world and observer states as those states with particular interests in Arab affairs. Today the Arab League has its permanent headquarters in Cairo, Egypt and consists of 22 Member States covering the Middle East and North Africa and 4 Observer States: India, Venezuela, Eritrea and Brazil. Without rigid geographic borders, the League of Arab States is open to Member States that share a sense of common 'Arabness' in terms of language, cultural unity, economic interdependence, historical and traditional ties, as well as ethnic and religious similarities. However, identifying the members of the League of Arab States as a single homogeneous society is to devalue the rich diversity that exists within the Arab World and among its people. The LAS encompasses approximately 5.25 million square miles and represents over 300 million people.⁷

The principal institutions of the Arab League are the Council of the League, the Joint Defense Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Committees and the Secretariat General. The Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Treaty (JDECT) in 1950 established the Joint Defense Council. It is composed of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defense from all Member States, and remains active in matters of League security and military affairs.⁸ The Council, composed of representatives of Member States, is the highest body of the Arab League. Each Member State has one vote within the Council, irrespective of its size in population or geographical land mass, similar to that of the United Nations General Assembly. The council meets formally twice a year, but convenes special sessions at the request of two Member States. Such cases that the body convenes to discuss include the stability and structural integrity of Member States and the international trade relations amongst the League of Arab States. The Council also has the task of directing all external activities of

¹ *The Pact of the League of Arab States*. League of Arab States. 22 March 1945.

² "Profile: Arab League." Overview Section. *BBC Worldwide*. 9 March 2011.
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/country_profiles/1550797.stm

³ *The Alexandria Protocol*. Pan-Arab Preliminary Conference. 8 October 1944.

⁴ *The Pact of the League of Arab States*. League of Arab States. 22 March 1945.

⁵ Department of State Bulletin Vol. XVI, No. 411, May 18, 1947 Washington, DC : Government Printing Office, 1947

⁶ *Arab League Declaration on the Invasion of Palestine*. League of Arab States. 15 May 1948.

⁷ "Profile: Arab League." Facts Section. *BBC Worldwide*. 9 March 2011.
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/country_profiles/1550797.stm

⁸ *Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Treaty*. League of Arab States. 17 June 1950.

the League, including the cooperation with relevant international bodies.⁹ It is this body that this committee will replicate.

The Economic and Social Council of the Arab League is the current body charged to promote the means for the economic and social development of the Arab world and coordinate the activities of specialized agencies of the LAS. Among the most important of the agencies are the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the Arab Fund for Assistance to Arab and African Countries, the Arab Monetary Fund, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, the Industrial Development Centre for Arab States, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, the Arab Council for Civil Aviation, the Arab Postal Union, the Arab Telecommunication Union, the Arab Labour Council, and the Council for Arab Unity.¹⁰ The Secretariat General is the institution of the League of Arab States responsible for implementing decisions, headed by the Secretary General. The current Secretary General is Nabil Elaraby, elected in May 2011, and was formerly Egypt's foreign minister. Secretary General Elaraby's role is key as it is he who represents the Arab world at the international level.¹¹

Important and seminal documents of the Arab League include the Cultural Treaty of the Arab League (1946), the Arab Charter on Human Rights (1994), and the Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism (1998). The Cultural Treaty promotes the cooperation of Arab States in various cultural aspects such as arts, sports, sciences, and academia. The treaty also encouraged the advancement of literacy rates, cultural preservation, joint sporting events, keeping pace with global intellectual movements, and cultural development.¹² The Arab Charter on Human Rights ratified in 1994, is the foundational building block for human rights within Arab States recognizing "the close link between human rights and world peace" as well as the "principles established by the Islamic Shari'a and other religions..." by promoting brotherhood and equality amongst human beings.¹³ The Arab Charter follows similar preexisting models in identifying the innate right to life, liberty, and security of person and the ability to freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development under protection of law.¹⁴ The Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism dedicated Member States to the eradication and global fight against terrorism in all forms. The document also outlined the LAS's political and judicial commitment to combat international terrorism.¹⁵

Today the LAS is active in matters that range from security issues to cultural activities, economic development to educational access and beyond. Yet the League's effectiveness has been severely tested by divisions among Member States both politically and socially.¹⁶ In particular, the LAS has been successful in promoting the Common Market (1965) and moving towards a Greater Arab Free Trade Zone (GAFTA) in which nearly all of the Arab World would be able to trade without barriers. GAFTA is extremely important in evaluating the LAS's effectiveness in economic matters, as the agreement relies on political institutions to reshape Arab trade policies. The agreement focuses on the issues of trade liberalization; reduction of agricultural subsidies; removal of tariff, monetary, administrative quotas; and intellectual property rights as central points in the Arab effort to move forward into the global economy.¹⁷

A series of events, beginning in 2011, placated the role of Syria within the LAS. The LAS had taken a more cautious approach to the events in Syria; however, the LAS called for the United Nations and "the international community" at large to exercise their responsibilities under international law "to take the necessary measures" against the Syrian government. But aside from calling for trials of the perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks, the resolution — adopted at a meeting in Cairo — did not specify what kind of international measures might be

⁹ *The Pact of the League of Arab States*. Article 3. League of Arab States. 22 March 1945.

¹⁰ "League of Arab States." International Democracy Watch. 2009.

<http://idw.csfederalismo.it/index.php/arab-league->

¹¹ Sarah El Deeb. "Arab League selects Egyptian as secretary-general." Associated Press. 15 May 2011.

<http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/arab-league-selects-egyptian-secretary-g>

¹² *Cultural Treaty of the Arab League*. League of Arab States. 20 November 1946.

¹³ *Arab Charter on Human Rights*. The League of Arab States. 15 September 1994.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ *Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism*. League of Arab States. 22 April 1998.

¹⁶ "Profile: Arab League." Issues Section. *BBC Worldwide*. 9 March 2011.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/country_profiles/1550797.stm

¹⁷ Javad Abedini and Nicolas Péridy. "The Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA): An Estimation of the Trade Effects." University of Nantes, France. <http://economics.ca/2007/papers/0300.pdf>

needed or justified. The LAS determined this necessary in September 2013 after a contentious stand-off between the United States of America and Syria.¹⁸

The current members of the League of Arab States:

ALGERIA, BAHRAIN, COMOROS, DJIBUTI, EGYPT, IRAQ, JORDAN, KUWAIT, LEBANON, LIBYA, MAURITANIA, MOROCCO, OMAN, PALESTINE, QATAR, SAUDI ARABIA, SOMALIA, SUDAN, SYRIA***, TUNISIA, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, and YEMEN.

***Syria is currently suspended from the League of Arab States following a vote on 12 November 2011 with 18 of the League's Member States affirming the suspension, Yemen and Lebanon opposing, Iraq abstaining and Syria not voting at all.

I. Ensuring Access to Political Processes in Conflict Situations

The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

- *Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 21.3*¹⁹

Introduction

In the last several decades, members of the League of Arab States (LAS) have seen countless changes in their political structures. The Spring of 2011 was a tipping point for the region. Civil unrest in Tunisia sparked a series of demonstrations and protests, and in some case revolutions, that called for change across the region. What would come to be colloquially known as the Arab Spring was the beginning of numerous changes in the governments, and the structure of those governments, within the LAS. But the LAS is no stranger to revolutions and political upheaval, or the struggle for political stability.

Civil unrest and revolutions help to create a turbulent atmosphere, especially when they are set against the backdrop of an already prevalent conflict situation. The crisis in Syria is a notable example of how demand for reform can quickly escalate into chaos and conflict, and halt political processes. In turn, three years of turmoil, countless refugees fleeing the area and destruction has intensified and cemented the ideas held by opposing sides.²⁰ Whether conflict breeds political upheaval or civil unrest breeds conflict is not definite in different situations it may be one or the other. Regardless of which causes the other, turbulence during the electoral process and political transitions, possibly changing the direction of a government and Member State, sometimes exacerbate conflict situations. Disfranchisement, under representation of various groups within Member States, rigged elections and falsified election results, and governmental transitions can often make conflict situations even more chaotic.

The protection of political processes is a necessity for progress, and to aid in peace and security in the region. Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states that "everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives."²¹ For those Member States that practice democracy, and have signed on to the UDHR, upholding this basic human right is not only important for the individuals for whom this right should be granted, but also for providing a representative government for Member States. Having this right granted for every individual in Member States may deter civil unrest by those who are not currently represented in the governing process. When individuals, and their

¹⁸ Kirkpatrick, David. "Arab League Endorses International Action." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 01 Sept. 2013. Web. 28 Feb. 2014.

¹⁹ "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights." <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a21> (accessed March 12, 2014).

²⁰ "Interactive: Timeline of Syria unrest." AlJazeera. 15 July 2012.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2012/02/201225111654512841.html> (accessed March 12, 2014).

²¹ "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights." <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a21> (accessed March 12, 2014).

interests, are being represented on a national level by elected representatives, they have played a role in the political process and the decision making in their country. Therefore, it becomes prudent to ensure individuals' rights to voting are being protected. Included in these processes are voting, the determination of winners in elections, and governmental transitions. Each of these has problematic areas, which will be explored throughout this guide. Sometimes, these areas overlap, making it all the more crucial to address each problem that can arise to assure a smooth political process from start to finish.

As conflicts arise and spill across borders, and relationships within and between the LAS and others in the international community change, this committee and its respective Member States face ever-changing and evolving changes in government and policy. Political processes in Member States are crucial, both domestically and abroad. Protecting access to these processes is, and will be, increasingly more crucial to the stability and security of the LAS, its, and the region as a whole.

Voting

Disfranchisement

The voting process is a delicate process that can easily either lead to uprising and unrest, or feed into an already existing conflict. Referring back to Article 21 of the UDHR, every global citizen "has the right to take part in the government of his country," meaning the right to a vote.²² This is arguably the most important part of the political process to protect because it is the cornerstone of the democratic political process. Without voting, democracy fails to exist. And for those Member States who hold democratic governments, the right to vote for citizens within those Member States is crucial to be upheld. Protecting the right to vote for all citizens, women and minorities included, is of the upmost importance in both ensuring the political process, and helping to ensure peace and security. Disfranchisement and deterring voters are two example scenarios that hinder this aspect of the political process.

Disfranchisement of various groups in Member States for political gain has, at times, helped to fuel civil unrest, especially when it comes to minorities and other under-represented groups. "Minorities in all regions of the world... are frequently excluded from taking part fully in the economic, political, social, and cultural life available to the majorities in the countries or societies where they live," explained Navanethem Pillay, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2009.²³ This sentiment is upheld in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Article 25 was written in hopes that "every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity... and without reasonable restrictions to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representative" and "to vote and be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage."²⁴ Minorities, in this case, of course includes women and ethnic and cultural minorities within various Member States. But in the context of the political process, it also means individuals not belonging to certain political parties or movements. Women, youth, and racial minorities are often those who are disfranchised, and as the Arab Spring proved, among these (especially youth) is enough fire to spark revolution. These underrepresented groups are subject to legislation passed by bodies entirely elected by a majority constituency, which can directly affect those groups.

The United Nations suggests that "democracy requires that citizens' interests be heard, deliberated, and legislated on."²⁵ As of 2015, women in Saudi Arabia will be granted the right to vote in local elections, per a decree by King Abdullah in 2011.²⁶ In Lebanon, the right to vote for women is conditional upon the completion of elementary education, a prerequisite not required of men.²⁷ While in Lebanon, the "school life" expectancy of both men and women is a complete thirteen years, the literacy rate of women, as of 2007, was

²² "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights." <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a21> (accessed March 12, 2014).

²³ "Minorities." Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. <http://www.ohchr.org/en/Issues/Minorities/Pages/MinoritiesIndex.aspx> (accessed March 12, 2014).

²⁴ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. 23 March 1976. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx> (accessed March 12, 2014).

²⁵ "Women and Democracy." United Nations. <http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/democracy/women.shtml> (accessed March 12, 2014).

²⁶ Daniel Tovrov, "Saudi Women Vote; Which Countries Still Don't Allow Women's Suffrage?" International Business Times. 26 September 2011. <http://www.ibtimes.com/saudi-women-vote-which-countries-still-dont-allow-womens-suffrage-318260> (accessed March 12, 2014).

²⁷ Ibid.

86%, as compared to almost 94% of men.²⁸ Women are, officially, able to vote in all Member States, though there are limitations, such as the aforementioned conditions in Saudi Arabia and Lebanon.²⁹

In 2011, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution A/RES/66/130 on women's political participation, reiterating "that active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making is essential to the achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy."³⁰ The resolution heralded women's right to vote and political participation as a human right, and "call[ed] upon all States to eliminate laws, regulations, and practices that, in a discriminatory manner, prevent or restrict women's participation in the political process."³¹ It went on to describe specific ways of allowing women better access to the political process such as promoting programmes for women that emphasize the importance of political involvement, monitoring progress of women's representation, and appointing women to all levels of government.³² Even the Security Council, whose mandate is to ensure peace and security internationally, has passed resolutions calling for more representation of women in local and national levels of government. In Resolution 1325, the Security Council heralded that women play an important role "in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building."³³ The political process and political institutions are even less accessible to women following conflict situations, and most countries already have less than thirty percent representation in national governments.³⁴

Unrest regarding unemployment brought youth to the streets across the region. Headlines across news stations, especially Al Jazeera, converse about the influence that the youth vote has on governments. The "youth vote could be a game changer," explained Djamila Ould Khettab, journalist for the international news outlet.³⁵ In Algeria earlier this year, the youth vote was targeted. Youth make up a vast majority of the country's population in a country where voter turn-out has been historically poor.³⁶ Some politicians employed social media and other digital forms of campaigning, in hopes of gathering youth attention, recognizing the importance of having youth support.

In Yemen, youth often feel voiceless, and in the early months of 2014, some began calling for an independent southern state.³⁷ Since the winter of 2011, citizens in Yemen have been in almost a constant state of civil unrest. The revolution that began with the Arab Spring "is only half done," explained a university student in Yemen.³⁸ Yemeni youth had initially felt in control of the future of their country after 2011. But as time wore on, it became apparent youth were still going to be underrepresented in their government. Of the 565 seats in Yemen's legislative body, only twenty percent of those seats are allocated for youth, which is defined in Yemen as people between the ages of eighteen and forty. Youth make up twenty percent of the government, but like Algeria, a majority of Yemenis fall within the ages to be considered youth. The most marginalised of these are the rural youth, who lack access to electricity much less internet, get "largely left out of the [political] process."³⁹ A separatist movement has emerged in southern Yemen, led by young Yemenis. Much of the youth sees no peaceful future with Yemen as a unified state. The youth claim they are being treated unfairly by those in the north. They also complain about a lack of education and a lack of employment, but often feel like "all they can

²⁸ "Lebanon." CIA World Factbook. 20 June 2014. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/le.html#Govt> (accessed March 12, 2014).

²⁹ Lisa Villani, Claire Provost, and Eric Hilaire. "A timeline of women's right to vote – interactive." *The Guardian*. 6 July 2011. <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/interactive/2011/jul/06/un-women-vote-timeline-interactive> (accessed March 12, 2014).

³⁰ "Women and Democracy." United Nations. <http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/democracy/women.shtml> (accessed March 12, 2014).

³¹ United Nations General Assembly. "Women and political participation." A/RES/66/130. 19 December 2011.

http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=%20A/RES/66/130 (accessed March 12, 2014).

³² Ibid.

³³ Security Council resolution 1325, S/RES/1325, 31 October 2000. http://www.unfpa.org/women/docs/res_1325e.pdf (accessed March 12, 2014.)

³⁴ "Women and Democracy." United Nations. <http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/democracy/women.shtml> (accessed March 12, 2014.)

³⁵ Djamila Ould Khettab. "Algerian youth speak out ahead of vote." *Al Jazeera*. 15 April 2014.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/03/algeria-youth-election-2014330133637924223.html> (accessed March 12, 2014).

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Peter Salisbury, "Analysis: No voice for Yemen's southern youth." *Al Jazeera*. 23 January 2014.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/01/analysis-no-voice-yemen-southern-youth-20141227274387428.html> (accessed March 12, 2014).

³⁸ Rebecca Murray. "Yemen's Youth Denied the Revolutionary Charge." Interpress Service. 15 February 2013.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/02/yemens-youth-denied-the-revolutionary-change/> (accessed March 12, 2014).

³⁹ Ibid.

do is to vent their frustration by tossing rocks at the army.”⁴⁰ Many of these youth see no way for improvement unless Yemen divides into two states. The youth in the north, southern Yemenis claim, became empowered on some level after the Arab Spring, something that did not occur for those in the rest of the country.⁴¹

The Arab Spring proved what youth throughout the LAS can do when motivated. But in places like Yemen, when those frustrations continue to build, those youth also are willing to move in ways that divide Member States, going so far as calling for civil war. It becomes apparent that the youth throughout Member States are motivated, with clear goals (employment and education), and are a force to be reckoned with, and with the use of social media are easier to organize. Civil unrest has frequently begun with youth. It becomes crucial for youth to be involved and engaged in the political process, represented in legislative bodies, to avoid conflict situations.

Youth and women are just two examples of those within the LAS who are frequently left out of the political process. Other marginalised groups, such as racial minorities, the disabled, moderates and dissenting voices, are also left out of these processes. When groups are left out of the political process, yet directly affected by it, it can breed resentment and unrest. These groups have helped to lead demonstrations, that have turned into much bigger issues, such as one single protest in Tunisia against unemployment, that have brought complete regime changes. For stability, and safety, and security, there should be a framework in place, something much more recent and with a wider scope of demographics than the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action that the UN General Assembly passed regarding women in 1995.⁴²

Deterrents

While disfranchisement is an issue facing many of the members of the LAS, it is not necessarily inclusive of those who have the right to vote, yet are discouraged from doing so. Opposing voices are often silenced, deterred from voting in elections, in order to maintain the polarized political atmosphere that has been created, often by revolutions. One of the most well-known international examples of this is the aftermath of Ayatollah Khomeini's rise to power in 1979. Those who were critical of the new regime, those moderates and leftist movements, were quickly silenced. They were frequently imprisoned, completely excluded from the political process.⁴³

Leela Jacinto, a journalist for *Foreign Policy*, suggests that “high levels of insecurity typically deter voters from going to the polls.”⁴⁴ While Jacinto was writing about voter turnout in Afghani elections in 2014, there is a lesson to be drawn from this statement. Violence, whether directly at the polling station or in the area in general, can be contributed to low voter turnout in elections, severely hindering individuals from partaking in the political process. The aforementioned election in Afghanistan was targeted by insurgents, hoping to derail the parliamentary election and closing many locations where voting was to take place. The insurgents were successful in deterring voter turnout. Roughly 4.2 million Afghans participated in the election, the lowest turnout since 2001.⁴⁵

While in the case of Afghanistan, violence was used to specifically target elections and deter voting, widespread violence within a country can also have negative effects on the election process. The violence in Syria was used to the advantage of Bashar Assad in 2014 as the administration insisted on carrying on with the scheduled election. The logic of the administration is that this election could be “a solution to the crisis: if the people choose Assad in the election, the fought should end; if Assad loses, then he will leave.”⁴⁶ But not only would

⁴⁰ Peter Salisbury, “Analysis: No voice for Yemen’s southern youth.” Al Jazeera. 23 January 2014.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/01/analysis-no-voice-yemen-southern-youth-20141227274387428.html> accessed March 12, 2014.)

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. General Assembly. 15 September 1995.

http://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/pdfs/Beijing_Declaration_and_Platform_for_Action.pdf (accessed March 12, 2014).

⁴³ “Remembering Iran’s 1979 Islamic Revolution.” Transcript. NPR. 17 August 2009.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=111944123> (accessed March 12, 2014).

⁴⁴ Leela Jacinto, “Stuffing the Sheep in Kabul,” *Foreign Policy*, 24 June 2014,

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/06/24/stuffing_the_sheep_in_kabul_afghanistan_elections_ghani_abdullah_karzai (accessed March 12, 2014).

⁴⁵ Yaroslav Trofimov and Maria Abi-Habib, “Attacks and Threats Deter Afghan Voters,” *Wall Street Journal*, 18 September 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052748703470904575499461068699730> (accessed March 12, 2014).

⁴⁶ Bassem Mroue, “Syria’s Bashar Assad Prepares to Run for President Despite Bloody War,” *Huffington Post*, 29 March 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/03/29/syrias-bashar-assad-prepa_n_5055050.html accessed March 27, 2014).

violence deter individual voters from going to vote, it would severely limit the number of polling stations.⁴⁷ This “national” election was not a nationwide process. Only the sections of the country the official government of Syria controls will be polled, excluding northern and eastern Syria.⁴⁸ Further, even those who could vote in government controlled areas of Syria, “many would not dare vote for anyone but Assad for fear of secret police who have kept a close eye on past elections.”⁴⁹ Not only does this speak to situational deterrents, making it difficult to get to the polling locations, but it also speaks to personal deterrents, in which voters are watched as they vote and intimidated into voting a certain way or not voting at all if voting a certain way meant facing retribution.

The above case in Syria makes it apparent why political processes should be protected, especially from these types of deterrents. The logic, in normal situations, is sound: an administrative change, at the will of the people, could make all the difference in a conflict situation. However, when a Member State is in a conflict situation, making elections available to the entire country can be difficult. The violence can deter many voters, or keep polling locations limited.

Post-Voting Protections

Election Results

In 2010, following the Egyptian election, protests broke out and many grew restless, claiming that the election had been rigged. Despite the government’s promise that the election would be fair, many complained that a request to have election monitors, who both monitor the voting and the counting of votes, was denied. The few permitted to vote were heavily restricted and forbidden to question both voters and officiates.⁵⁰ The civil unrest in 2010 turned to revolution in the spring of 2011. Rigging elections often play into disfranchisement, when minority votes are “lost,” or pressured to vote against their interests. Though they have the right to vote, it is compromised by ensuring candidates supporting their interests do not win by rigging election against their favour.

Things such as rigged elections, false election results, or voter fraud compromise the integrity of the election system, and therefore the political process. Ensuring access to voting is important, but it is also crucial that elections be honest and fair in order to properly represent the interests and desires of the population of each Member State. The right to vote means little if the votes are not reflected in election results.

Governmental Transitions

Arguably the most delicate of these processes are governmental transitions. It is crucial to protect the election process as a whole, but when it comes to transitioning governments, the situation is just as volatile. The transition alone can cause conflict. Both Egypt and Libya, for example, have experienced difficulty with governmental transitions. In a fair election, a government transition can be the will of the people. But from 1969 to 2012, Libya struggled to have peaceful transitions. Muammar al-Gaddafi was ousted from the government in October 2011, and the transition to democracy has been a difficult one. Armed militias continued to cause conflict in Libya over a year after the leader was removed from power. Continued access to elections, representation in government, and security under the National Transitional Council have all been concerns for the current government in Libya. It has been difficult to get the citizens of Libya to trust their government and its institutions, as many still question its legitimacy.⁵¹

It is imperative that governmental transitions be smooth, to both ensure the political process is protected in days ahead, but also to help ensure peace and security. Many Member States have seen what comes of those

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Basma Atassi and Alia Chughtai, “Explainer: Who can vote in Syria’s elections?” *Al Jazeera*, 2 June 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2014/06/explainer-who-can-vote-syria-elections-20146211522563602.html> (accessed March 27, 2014).

⁴⁹ Bassem Mroue, “Syria’s Bashar Assad Prepares to Run for President Despite Bloody War,” *Huffington Post*, 29 March 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/03/29/syrias-bashar-assad-prepa_n_5055050.html (accessed March 27, 2014).

⁵⁰ “‘Vote rigging’ mars Egypt election.” *Al Jazeera*, 29 November 2010, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2010/11/2010112844850659269.html> (accessed March 29, 2014).

⁵¹ “Libya in Transition,” *Al Jazeera*, 15 February 2012, <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/insidestory/2012/02/201221573934876192.html> <accessed March 29, 2014>

transitions that are less than smooth, and how a poor transition can help take a conflict situation from bad to worse. Ensuring smooth governmental transitions helps to ensure the political process is protected from beginning to end.

Conclusion

Voting, elections, and governmental transitions are delicate procedures with influence on the entire populations of a Member State, and in times of conflict, can be all the more important to protect. The Arab Spring in 2011 is a prime example of how disfranchised, and underrepresented, individuals organize, can shake stability within Member States. Disfranchisement and deterring voting have potential to cause further issues, especially when added to issues with the elections themselves, such as rigged and falsified election results.

In order to ensure access to the political process, these are issues that need to be addressed for each Member State. For those who have chosen democracy, policy that allows for the citizens of those Member States to fully participate in their governments in a way that creates a representative and cohesive government may be a wise decision. In doing so, individuals will see themselves represented in the political process, and this may deter further civil unrest, protests, and revolutions that cause complete upheaval and instability in Member States.

There are frameworks in place that give suggestions as to how to further combat these issues, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, though only seven Member States have been signatories. These are frameworks that can be examined, and though Member States choose not to ratify those covenants, provide examples of how to better protect political processes. To protect these political processes is to help ensure peace and security and stability within the LAS.

Committee Directive

It will be the directive of this committee to find solutions to protect the political process within the League of Arab States, specifically in times of conflict. Ensuring the political process goes unhindered will aid in the assurance of peace and security across Member States. The protection of the political process during times of conflict may help to calm civil unrest that can quickly turn into riots and revolution. How can the League of Arab States create more cohesive and representative governments within individual Member States? Is there a way to prevent the disfranchisement in women and other minorities while still maintaining the cultural and religious representation that exists within Member States? How will security for elections be guaranteed? Can it be guaranteed? How can Member States better ensure fair and honest elections? How should elections be monitored to ensure both fairness and sovereignty? How can governments better transition between administrations? How will Member States help to ensure the legitimacy of their administrations? How will the political process be further protected when transitions become difficult and take years to complete? Delegates should not only look at situations within their own Member State, but both the LAS and the international community as a whole, for answers to these solutions. Political processes also affect foreign policy, and instability and insecurity also has potential to spill across borders, making ensuring this process crucial to the region as a whole, so solutions to these questions should be considered on both a domestic and foreign level.

II: Strengthening and Expanding Arab Economies: Encouragement of International Trade Relations

"No one should ever underestimate the resilience and determination of the Arab people or the great opportunities that exist in the region. The Arab region possesses important human and material resources. If this wealth is mobilized now, both the region and the global economy would benefit."

- UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon⁵²

Introduction

From the signing of the Alexandria Protocol on October 7, 1944, establishing and maintaining international and intra-regional trade has been a primary focus of the League of Arab States (LAS).⁵³ Though Arab free trade

⁵² "Address to the Arab Economic, Social and Development Summit," The United Nations, January 19, 2009. (accessed May 29, 2014).

http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/speeches/statments_full.asp?statID=401#.U5pNVfldV8E

⁵³ *The Alexandria Protocol*, International Democracy Watch,

agreements have existed and provided preferential tariff duties to participating nations, intra-regional trade has remained flat and a trade deficit outside of energy source exports has existed in many Member States.⁵⁴ In accordance, instability within the region continues to hinder the economic and social development needed to meet worldwide standards for international trade and investment for many Member States, thereby limiting their ability to establish or participate in international free trade agreements (FTA).⁵⁵ This has revealed the importance of international trade relations in the economic development and stability of the Middle East and North African (MENA) region, as the world has become more economically connected over the last half century.⁵⁶ Even when faced with the dawn of globalization, intra-regional trade and investment remain as a primary focus to encouraging successful financial markets throughout the developing and least developed Member States of the LAS.⁵⁷ With the continuous efforts made by the LAS to improve economic ties throughout the globe, the exact hindrances to development and economic stability plaguing the MENA region have reaffirmed the ultimate goal of Arab economic integration, and provided inspiration for new solutions in encouraging international trade relations.⁵⁸

The Economic Council of the LAS was formed in 1950, with the signing of the Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation.⁵⁹ Eventually being renamed the Economic and Social Council (ESC) in 1980, it has observed, promoted the funding for, and administered efforts in achieving economic and social development throughout the LAS.⁶⁰ The ESC additionally supervises the efforts of specialized agencies which have been created under the LAS banner; for example, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), Arab Fund for Assistance to Arab and African Countries, Arab Monetary Fund, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, and a myriad of labor unions and social development councils.⁶¹

In 1957, the ESC approved the Agreement on Economic Unity among Member States, creating the Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU).⁶² With the signing of the Arab Common Market (ACM), in 1964, the CAEU took its first significant step in establishing unified trade liberalization.⁶³ It is important to note that Article one of the ACM calls for the implementation of fundamental equal human rights necessary for economic development, including freedom of movement, exchange, residence, and the right to private ownership.⁶⁴ Even

www.internationaldemocracywatch.org/attachments/263_The%20Alexandria%20Protocol.pdf (accessed May 29, 2014).

⁵⁴ “League of Arab States’ Regional Integration: Opportunities for Trade and Employment,” International Trade Centre, http://legacy.intracen.org/marketanalysis/docs/Newsletters/LAS_Opportunities_for_Trade_and_Employment_Executive_Summary.pdf (accessed May 29, 2014).

⁵⁵ “US-Middle East Free Trade Coalition Discussion with USTR On a New MENA Trade & Investment Partnership Initiative,” National Foreign Trade Council, http://www.nftc.org/default/Publications/Trade_Policy/2011%20Middle%20East%20and%20AF%20Trade%20NFTC%20US%20MEFTA.pdf (accessed May 29, 2014).

⁵⁶ *The Arab World and Globalization: Challenges and Opportunities*. The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies. 1999. <http://www.lcps-lebanon.org/activities/1323341619-The%20Arab%20World%20and%20Globalization%20Challenges%20and%20Opportunities.pdf> (accessed May 24, 2014).

⁵⁷ “League of Arab States’ Regional Integration: Opportunities for Trade and Employment,” International Trade Centre, http://legacy.intracen.org/marketanalysis/docs/Newsletters/LAS_Opportunities_for_Trade_and_Employment_Executive_Summary.pdf (accessed May 29, 2014).

⁵⁸ Farooq Mitha, “Economic Reform in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA),” The Geller Law Group, <http://www.gellermithalaw.com/pdf/MENA%20Economic%20Reform%20Farooq%20A.%20Mitha.pdf> (accessed May 29, 2014).

⁵⁹ *Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Between the States of the Arab League*, League of Arab States, June 17, 1950. http://www.internationaldemocracywatch.org/attachments/265_Treaty%20of%20Joint%20Defense%20and%20Economic%20Cooperation%20Between%20the%20States%20of%20the%20Arab%20League.pdf (accessed May 29, 2014).

⁶⁰ Javad Abedini, Nicolas Peridy, “The Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA): An Estimation of the Trade Effects,” Canadian Economics Association, 2007. <http://economics.ca/2007/papers/0300.pdf> (accessed May 29, 2014).

⁶¹ “Arab League,” International Democracy Watch, <http://www.internationaldemocracywatch.org/index.php/arab-league-> (accessed May 29, 2014).

⁶² *The Economic Unity Agreement Among States the Arab League*, League of Arab States, June 3, 1957. http://www.cris.unu.edu/riks/web/treaties/constituent_treaties/19_The_Economic_Unity_Agreement_Among_States_the_Arab_League_establishing_the_Council_of_Arab_EconomicXX3June1957.pdf (accessed June 10, 2014).

⁶³ *Arab Common Market Agreement*, League of Arab States, March 5, 1965. http://www.wto.org/gatt_docs/English/SULPDF/90780034.pdf (accessed June 10, 2014).

⁶⁴ Ibid.

with the implementation of the ACM, the creation of a unified customs union was not yet possible.⁶⁵ Then on February 19, 1997, with the adoption of resolution No. 1317, a Greater Arab Free Trade Agreement (GAFTA) was created.⁶⁶ This agreement deviated from previous initiatives by providing a framework for progressive inclusions of Member States to stress the necessity of the private sector in stimulating economic development and integration in the region.⁶⁷ Full exemptions for customs duties have been in effect for Member States belonging to GAFTA, as of 2005.⁶⁸

Current Situation

Globalization has inspired a degree of controversy due to the social, political, and economic changes which have been associated with its onset.⁶⁹ Within the MENA region this has given rise to the misconception that globalization represents a western hegemony that seeks to undermine the cultural significance of the Arab world.⁷⁰ Global economic integration therefore, has mistakenly been associated with development inequality and migration within the region.⁷¹ These fallacies have done little to silence public outcry for the improved standards of living that sustainable development can provide, and the significance of international trade relations in achieving this goal.⁷² An abundant supply of natural resources and human capital continues to provide Member States with international trade opportunities outside of the LAS, and the means to establishing lasting intra-regional trade liberalization.⁷³

European Union (EU) and European Free Trade Association (EFTA)

The Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) between MENA and the EU represent a crucial economic, geographic, and historic link between the two regions.⁷⁴ Beginning in the 1960s, European nations endeavored to establish new cooperative economic agreements throughout MENA.⁷⁵ This has continued in the form of trade liberalization efforts by the EU and EFTA in establishing bilateral trade agreements with LAS Member States.⁷⁶ As a part of the Barcelona Process, initiated by the EU in 1995, the establishment of a European Mediterranean Free Trade Area was conceived in the pursuit of a unified FTA between MENA and the EU.⁷⁷ In achieving this objective a proposal to encourage intra-regional trade and economic integration between the EU's primary trade partners in the Mediterranean was established, specifically Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco.⁷⁸ This arrangement was promoted by the European Investment Bank, and expedited under its auspices by the Facility

⁶⁵ "Greater Arab Free Trade Agreement," Ministry of Industry & Trade The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, <http://mit.gov.jo/Default.aspx?tabid=732> (accessed June 10, 2014).

⁶⁶ *Arab Free Trade Area Agreement*, League of Arab States, February 19, 1997 [http://www3.nd.edu/~jbergstr/DataEIAs2006/FTA5yrData_files/PDF%20Files/Africa/PanArab%20Free%20Trade%20Area%20Agreement%20\(1997\).pdf](http://www3.nd.edu/~jbergstr/DataEIAs2006/FTA5yrData_files/PDF%20Files/Africa/PanArab%20Free%20Trade%20Area%20Agreement%20(1997).pdf) (accessed June 10, 2014).

⁶⁷ "Arab Free Trade Area (AFTA)," European Institute for Research on Mediterranean and Euro-Arab Cooperation, <http://www.medeia.be/en/themes/economy-and-trade/arab-free-trade-area-afta/> (accessed June 10, 2014).

⁶⁸ "Greater Arab Free Trade Agreement," Ministry of Industry & Trade The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, <http://mit.gov.jo/Default.aspx?tabid=732> <accessed June 10, 2014>

⁶⁹ "Globalization," Global Policy Forum, <http://www.globalpolicy.org/globalization.html> (accessed June 10, 2014).

⁷⁰ "Selection from a Roundtable Discussion of Globalization and Its Impact on Arab Culture," Cengage Learning, October 26, 2000. http://college.cengage.com/history/primary_sources/world/globalization_impact_arabs.htm (accessed June 18, 2014).

⁷¹ "Globalization, Migration and the Arab World," St. Cloud State University, <http://web.stcloudstate.edu/amehdi/community/globalization.html> (accessed June 18, 2014).

⁷² *The Sustainable Development Initiative in the Arab Region*, League of Arab States, October 25, 2001, http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships/activities_initiate/101202_sd_initiative_arab_region.pdf (accessed June 18, 2014).

⁷³ "League of Arab States' Regional Integration: Opportunities for Trade and Employment," International Trade Centre, http://legacy.intracen.org/marketanalysis/docs/Newsletters/LASOpportunities_for_Trade_and_Employment_Executive_Summary.pdf (accessed June 18, 2014).

⁷⁴ Maria Dolores Parra Robles, "The Impact of FTAs on MENA Trade," University Jaume I, <http://www.univ-orleans.fr/leo/infer/PARRA%201.pdf> (accessed June 18, 2014).

⁷⁵ Riad al Khouri, "EU and U.S. Free Trade Agreements in the Middle East and North Africa," Carnegie Endowment for Peace, June, 2008. http://carnegieendowment.org/files/cmec8_al_khouri_final.pdf (accessed June 18, 2014).

⁷⁶ Maria Dolores Parra Robles, "The Impact of FTAs on MENA Trade," University Jaume I, <http://www.univ-orleans.fr/leo/infer/PARRA%201.pdf> (accessed June 18, 2014).

⁷⁷ "The Barcelona Process," European Union, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/euromed/barcelona_en.htm (accessed June 18, 2014).

⁷⁸ "The relaunch of the Barcelona process," European League for Economic Cooperation, June 3, 2005. <http://www.eleccece.eu/en/system/files/publications/elec-viewpoints/mediterranean/med2-e.pdf> (accessed June 18, 2014).

for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP).⁷⁹ In 2001, the Agreement for Establishing a Mediterranean Free Trade Area (Agadir) was written, and in 2007 it was implemented.⁸⁰ In addition, Algeria and Lebanon have signed interim bilateral agreements under the framework of Agadir, forming a Euro-Mediterranean agreement (Euromed).⁸¹ The EFTA has also established bilateral trade agreements with all members of Euromed, excluding Algeria.⁸² In 2009, the EFTA and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) signed the EFTA-GCC Free Trade Agreement promoting international trade relations between the EU and MENA regions.⁸³ This agreement will establish a free trade area between the EFTA and GCC states, and enters into force on July 1, 2014.⁸⁴

United States of America (U.S.)

The history of international trade between MENA and the U.S. has been largely driven by the oil and natural gas wealth within the region, currently representing more than 66% of the world's reserves.⁸⁵ With the importance of diversifying international and intra-regional trade becoming more vital for economic success in the region, the U.S. has played a facilitating role in assisting Member States in joining the WTO by promoting the internal social and economic reforms necessary for full accession into the body.⁸⁶ Trade and Investment Framework Agreements (TIFAs) and Qualifying Industrial Zone agreements (QIZs) between MENA and the U.S. have provided a basis to which lasting economic relationships can be cultivated in the form of bilateral FTAs.⁸⁷ One such agreement has set precedence and proved to be instrumental as a catalyst for further FTAs between the U.S. and MENA, creating immediate and lasting growth in bilateral trade, the Jordan-U.S. Free Trade Agreement of 2001 (JUSFTA).⁸⁸ Pursuant to further economic cooperation, in 2003, an initiative was proposed by President George W. Bush to create a FTA between the U.S. and Middle East (US-MEFTA).⁸⁹ This initiative provided for progressive inclusion of other Member States throughout the MENA region, with a target deadline of 2013 for a multi-lateral FTA (US-MENA) with the creation of TIFAs and bilateral FTAs between the U.S. and individual nations as a stepping stone.⁹⁰ Though a multi-lateral agreement has not been reached, currently the U.S. has FTAs with Bahrain, Jordan, Morocco, and Oman.⁹¹ These agreements draw an important distinction from previous agreements in the region, requiring extensive liberalization of trade and FDI policy reforms.⁹² The efforts to complete a US-MENA FTA have continued throughout President Barack Obama's administration with the announcement of the MENA Trade and Investment Partnership Initiative (MENA-TIP) in 2011, to

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Maria Dolores Parra Robles, "The Impact of FTAs on MENA Trade," University Jaume I, <http://www.univ-orleans.fr/leo/infer/PARRA%20I.pdf> (accessed June 25, 2014).

⁸² "League of Arab States' Regional Integration: Opportunities for Trade and Employment," International Trade Centre, http://legacy.intracen.org/marketanalysis/docs/Newsletters/LAS_Opportunities_for_Trade_and_Employment_Executive_Summary.pdf (accessed June 25, 2014).

⁸³ *Free Trade Agreement between The EFTA States and The Member States of the Co-Operation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf*, The European Free Trade Association, June 9, 2009. <http://www.efta.int/media/documents/legal-texts/free-trade-relations/gulf-cooperation-council-GCC/EFTA-GCC%20Free%20Trade%20Agreement.pdf> (accessed June 25, 2014).

⁸⁴ "Gulf Cooperation Council," European Free Trade Association, <http://www.efta.int/free-trade/free-trade-agreements/gcc> (accessed June 25, 2014).

⁸⁵ Nader Habibi and Dr. Eckart Woertz, "U.S.-Arab Economic Relations and the Obama Administration," Crown Center for Middle East Studies, February, 2009. <http://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB34.pdf> (accessed June 25, 2014).

⁸⁶ "Middle East Free Trade Area Initiative (MEFTA)," Office of the United States Trade Representative, <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/other-initiatives/middle-east-free-trade-area-initiative-mefta> (accessed June 25, 2014).

⁸⁷ Riad al Khouri, "EU and U.S. Free Trade Agreements in the Middle East and North Africa," Carnegie Endowment for Peace, June, 2008. http://carnegieendowment.org/files/cmec8_al_khouri_final.pdf (accessed June 25, 2014).

⁸⁸ Marwa Al Nasa'a, John Chin, Shawn Leonard, Claudia Munoz, and Brooke Reilly, "The Jordan-U.S. Free Trade Agreement: Eight Years Later," University of Michigan, March 21, 2008. (accessed June 25, 2014). <http://www.umich.edu/~ipolicy/Policy%20Papers/jordanusfta.pdf>

⁸⁹ Robert Z. Lawrence, "Recent U.S. Free Trade Initiatives in the Middle East: Opportunities but no Guarantees," Harvard University, December 2006. <http://www.iie.com/publications/papers/lawrence1206.pdf> (accessed June 25, 2014).

⁹⁰ Riad al Khouri, "EU and U.S. Free Trade Agreements in the Middle East and North Africa," Carnegie Endowment for Peace, June, 2008. http://carnegieendowment.org/files/cmec8_al_khouri_final.pdf (accessed June 25, 2014).

⁹¹ Rebecca M. Nelson, Mary Jane Bolle, and Shayerah Ilias, "U.S. Trade and Investment in the Middle East and North Africa: Overview and Issues for Congress" Congressional Research Service, January 20, 2012. <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/183739.pdf> (accessed June 29, 2014).

⁹² Robert Z. Lawrence, "Recent U.S. Free Trade Initiatives in the Middle East: Opportunities but no Guarantees," Harvard University, December 2006. <http://www.iie.com/publications/papers/lawrence1206.pdf> (accessed June 29, 2014).

promote U.S. trade and investment in Member States.⁹³ Presently, trade with MENA represents less than 5% of total U.S. trade and 1% of global U.S. FDI, with the Member States belonging to the GCC accounting for a majority of U.S. Imports from MENA.⁹⁴ The U.S. continues to maintain its commitment to providing support to Member States seeking WTO accession including Lebanon, Algeria, Yemen, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia.⁹⁵

Russia, India, and China – Future Projected Growth

Russia, India, and China are poised to become the fastest growing trade partners with MENA over the next three decades.⁹⁶ The MENA region has traditionally been dominated by trade with the EU, but projections show that the fast emerging economies of these three BRICS nations will experience continued international trade growth with Member States in the foreseeable future.⁹⁷

The Russian Federation has become one of the most significant suppliers of agricultural staples to the MENA countries, signaling a trend in which food security in the region will continue to be directly tied to wheat production in the Black Sea nations.⁹⁸ Russia's geopolitical goals within the MENA region also continue to strengthen with the formation of joint business councils negotiating future industrial, agricultural, and developmental agreements.⁹⁹ This has manifested in recent history with the formation of the Eurasian Customs Union (ECU) and its implementation of a Common External Tariff (CET), in 2010.¹⁰⁰ The willingness of the ECU to negotiate free trade agreements with nations emerging from the political aftermath of the Arab Spring has strengthened its ties within MENA.¹⁰¹ This has bolstered its efforts to forge new FTAs with nations belonging to the WTO such as Egypt, as well as nations seeking WTO accession.¹⁰²

The expanded industrialization of China and India over the last two decades has dramatically increased their demand for oil, gas, and natural resources.¹⁰³ Strong economic ties have therefore been forged between the nations of the GCC and China and India, but the competition from these two countries in global non-fuel source export markets has granted an additional challenge for developing Member States.¹⁰⁴ Chinese National Oil Companies (NOCs) currently have a vested interest in oil and gas projects in Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Syria, the UAE and Yemen.¹⁰⁵ It is also in China's interests to expand its exports to the MENA region, as their need to

⁹³ Rebecca M. Nelson, Mary Jane Bolle, and Shayerah Ilias, "U.S. Trade and Investment in the Middle East and North Africa: Overview and Issues for Congress," Congressional Research Service, March 3, 2014.
<http://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42153.pdf> (accessed June 29, 2014).

⁹⁴ Rebecca M. Nelson, Mary Jane Bolle, and Shayerah Ilias, "U.S. Trade and Investment in the Middle East and North Africa: Overview and Issues for Congress" Congressional Research Service, January 20, 2012.
<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/183739.pdf> (accessed June 29, 2014).

⁹⁵ "Middle East Free Trade Area Initiative (MEFTA)," Office of the United States Trade Representative,
<http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/other-initiatives/middle-east-free-trade-area-initiative-mefta> (accessed June 29, 2014).

⁹⁶ "MENA trade with Russia, India and China set to grow fastest through to 2020," Open Society Foundation for South Africa, February 22, 2012.
<http://www.safpi.org/news/article/2012/mena-trade-russia-india-and-china-set-grow-fastest-through-2020> (accessed June 29, 2014).

⁹⁷ Aarti Nagraj, "MENA, Russia Trade to Grow 14%," Gulf Business, February 20, 2012.
<http://gulfbusiness.com/2012/02/mena-russia-trade-to-grow-14/#.U8Ru0PldWVI> (accessed June 29, 2014).

⁹⁸ "Shifting Sources of Wheat Supply for MENA Countries: the Rise of the Black Sea," Duke University, May 2014.
http://sites.duke.edu/minerva/files/2014/06/2014-06-02_CGGC-Minerva_Shift-to-Black-Sea_version-2.0.pdf (accessed June 29, 2014).

⁹⁹ "Bahrain, Russia to open new trade relations," Trade Arabia, April 28, 2014.
http://www.tradearabia.com/news/LAW_256961.html (accessed June 29, 2014).

¹⁰⁰ Eli Keene, "Growing the Eurasian Customs Union Within the WTO," Carnegie Endowment for Peace, May 30, 2013.
<http://carnegieendowment.org/2013/05/30/growing-eurasian-customs-union-within-wto/g7ee> (accessed June 29, 2014).

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² "Customs Union, Egypt discussing free trade zone," Russia Beyond the Headlines, March 27, 2014.
http://rbth.com/news/2014/03/27/customs_union_egypt_discussing_free_trade_zone_35400.html (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹⁰³ "Strengthening MENA's Trade and Investment Links with China and India," The World Bank, September 2, 2008.
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMENA/Resources/MENA_China_India_Sept08.pdf (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ "China and India's Growing Influence in the MENA Region: Their Legacy and Future Footprint," Al Masah Capital Limited, 2010.
http://ae.zawya.com/researchreports/p_2010_07_22_09_20_27/20101219_p_2010_07_22_09_20_27_092416.pdf (accessed July 2, 2014).

establish lasting bilateral trade with Member States grows.¹⁰⁶ To further this relationship, China has embarked to create FTAs with Member States not only in the GCC but throughout MENA to encourage trade and meet their demand for consumer goods and services with Chinese exports.¹⁰⁷ The meteoric rise of India's economy has made them the fifth largest oil consumer in the world, forging a strong link between India and the oil producing nations of the GCC, specifically Saudi Arabia and the UAE.¹⁰⁸ Historically the GCC states and India have had preferential trade ties, and a FTA between the GCC and India (India-GCC FTA) is in the bilateral stages originating from the signing of its framework in 2004.¹⁰⁹ Additionally India provides a significant amount of labor force to the nations of the GCC, as well as contributing heavily to the expansion of the services sectors within MENA in the form of science and technology.¹¹⁰ Although China and India present an economic challenge for labor abundant Member States, their interests also present the opportunities to forge economic connections which can further expand the international and intra-regional import and export markets throughout MENA and Asia.¹¹¹

Intra-Regional Trade and Investment

The current status of intra-regional trade liberalization efforts encompasses various bilateral agreements, trading blocs, and FTAs seeking to realize a unified multi-lateral agreement, a GAFTA.¹¹² The primary barriers to intra-regional trade integration among Member States have evolved with the shifting political, economic, and social climates throughout MENA.¹¹³ Successful implementation of a multi-lateral agreement has been negatively affected by tariff and non-tariff barriers (NTBs), as well as a stagnating effort to diversify exports within the region which economically separates the developed oil and natural gas producers from the LDCs among Member States.¹¹⁴ The most significant hurdle for ensuring long term intra-regional is centered upon the varying trade and FDI laws within the region, represented by a historical interventionist-redistributive economic model which in some Member States has not adapted or changed significantly enough to adequately promote more privatization and FDI.¹¹⁵

With intra-regional trade currently accounting for only one tenth of total trade, the preferential tariff duties levied to members of GAFTA have not fully realized the potential for intra-regional trade within MENA.¹¹⁶ They have also failed to produce the formation of an all-encompassing free trade area, with tariff levels still

¹⁰⁶ Dr. Edward Tse Booz, "MENA and China- Keys to Overseas Investment," Latham & Watkins LLP, September 24, 2012. <http://www.lw.com/admin/upload/documents/dr-ed-tse-booz-company-2012-english.pdf> (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹⁰⁷ Ted Liu, "China's Economic Engagement in the Middle East and North Africa – Analysis," Eurasia Review, January 27, 2014. http://www.fride.org/download/27.01.2014_EURASIAREVIEW_US_TD.pdf (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹⁰⁸ "China and India's Growing Influence in the MENA Region: Their Legacy and Future Footprint," Al Masah Capital Limited, 2010. http://ae.zawya.com/researchreports/p_2010_07_22_09_20_27/20101219_p_2010_07_22_09_20_27_092416.pdf (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹⁰⁹ "India- GCC Relations," Embassy of India, <http://www.indianembassy.org.sa/Content.aspx?ID=708> (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹¹⁰ "China and India's Growing Influence in the MENA Region: Their Legacy and Future Footprint," Al Masah Capital Limited, 2010. (accessed July 2, 2014). http://ae.zawya.com/researchreports/p_2010_07_22_09_20_27/20101219_p_2010_07_22_09_20_27_092416.pdf

¹¹¹ "Strengthening MENA's Trade and Investment Links with China and India," The World Bank, September 2, 2008. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMENA/Resources/MENA_China_India_Sept08.pdf (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹¹² "League of Arab States' Regional Integration: Opportunities for Trade and Employment," International Trade Centre, http://legacy.intracen.org/marketanalysis/docs/Newsletters/LAS-Opportunities_for_Trade_and_Employment_Executive_Summary.pdf (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹¹³ Dr. Nasser Saidi, "Arab Economic Integration: An Awakening to Remove Barriers to Prosperity," International Monetary Fund, February 2005. (accessed July 2, 2014). <http://nassersaidi.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Arab-Economic-Integration-an-awakening-to-remove-barriers-to-prosperity-FEB-2005.pdf>

¹¹⁴ Massoud Karshenas, "Structural Obstacles to Economic Adjustment in the MENA Region: The International Trade Aspects," University of London, January 1999. <http://www.erf.org.eg/CMS/uploads/pdf/9932.pdf> (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹¹⁵ Farooq Mitha, "Economic Reform in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)," The Geller Law Group, <http://www.gellermithalaw.com/pdf/MENA%20Economic%20Reform%20Farooq%20A.%20Mitha.pdf> (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹¹⁶ Celine Carrere, Julien Gourdon, and Marcelo Olarreaga, "Regional Integration and Natural Resources: who benefits? Evidence from MENA," Fondation Pour Les Etudes Et Recherches Sur Le Developpement International, January 2013. (accessed July 2, 2014). http://www.ferdi.fr/sites/www.ferdi.fr/files/publication/fichiers/WP63_Carrere_web.pdf

being below global medians in certain industries which bear political significance for individual nations.¹¹⁷ Outside of tariff barriers, NTBs present a formidable opposition in the form of conflicting customs regulations and quality control standardizations which continue to hinder the economic progress of many nations in the region.¹¹⁸ This change continues to be centered on economic and governance reforms to promote lower costs and an evolving business environment among Member States.¹¹⁹ It is estimated that the removal of NTBs could create more than 2 million jobs and increase the total trade within MENA by 10 percent.¹²⁰

Export diversification is significant to any developing nation, but it has garnered a higher level of attention within MENA because of the historic and current level of export dependence on natural resources.¹²¹ The extent to which intra-regional trade success is measured has therefore been closely tied to the level of export diversification within the region.¹²² This has also drawn attention to the levels at which FTA and bilateral agreements between Member States creates new trade within MENA or adversely results in trade diversion, a decrease in imports from outside of MENA.¹²³ Considering that the status of intra-regional trade is heavily concentrated in unskilled manufacturing, education and social reform programs must continue to be developed to add value to human capital within the least developed Member States and ensure a sustainable and diverse economic future for the entire MENA region.¹²⁴

The prevalence of state intervention in leading economic, social, and political reform has historically been an instrument for change in the MENA region from the dawn of Arab independence following World War II.¹²⁵ The degree to which this has been illustrated has varied among Member States, but an interventionist-redistributive economic model has been used to facilitate the economic and infrastructural needs within the region.¹²⁶ The emergence of globalization as a force for maximum resource allocation after the Cold War has necessitated trade and exchange rate policy reform within MENA to remain competitive in the global marketplace.¹²⁷ A shift away from a protectionist economic mindset has accordingly surfaced to allow for FDI, entrepreneurship, and investment conditions with the advancement of more privatization among Member States.¹²⁸ For the full potential of rising oil and natural gas revenues to affect neighboring resource poor Member States, a progressive gaze must be fixed collectively upon a standardization of a privatization model throughout MENA.¹²⁹ This will allow for the cumulative wealth of the GCC nations to continue to be a powerful tool for

¹¹⁷ Sandor Richter, "Regional Trade Integration in the Middle East and North Africa: Lessons from Central Europe," Forschungsschwerpunkt Internationale Wirtschaft, March 2012. (accessed July 2, 2014).

http://www.fiw.ac.at/fileadmin/Documents/Publikationen/Policy_Briefs/14.FIW_Policy_Brief.Richter.Mena.pdf

¹¹⁸ Rina Bhattacharya and Hirut Wolde, "Constraints on Trade in the MENA Region," International Monetary Fund, February 2010. <http://cid.bcrp.gob.pe/biblio/papers/imf/2010/febrero/wp1031.pdf> (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹¹⁹ Mustapha Kamel Nabli, "Middle East and North Africa: Recent Economic Developments and Prospects," Islamic Development Bank, May 11, 2008.

<http://www.isdb.org/irj/go/km/docs/documents/IDBDevelopments/Internet/English/IDB/CM/Publications/EconomicLectureSeries/Nabli-Lecture-02.pdf> (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹²⁰ "League of Arab States' Regional Integration: Opportunities for Trade and Employment," International Trade Centre, http://legacy.intracen.org/marketanalysis/docs/Newsletters/LAS-Opportunities_for_Trade_and_Employment_Executive_Summary.pdf (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹²¹ A. Suut Dogruel and Mahmut Tekce, "Trade Liberalization and Export Diversification in Selected MENA Countries," *Topics in Middle Eastern and African Economics* (September 2011), (accessed July 2, 2014). http://www.luc.edu/orgs/meea/volume13/PDFS/Dogruel_Tekce_R2.pdf

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ "Regional Integration in MENA: many attempts, few results," Centre D'études Prospectives et D'informations Internationales, September 30, 2012. <http://www.strategie.gouv.fr/blog/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/let325ang1.pdf> (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹²⁴ Ibid

¹²⁵ Farooq Mitha, "Economic Reform in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)," The Geller Law Group, <http://www.gellermithalaw.com/pdf/MENA%20Economic%20Reform%20Farooq%20A.%20Mitha.pdf> (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Susan L. Sakmar "Globalization and Trade Initiatives in the Arab World: Historical Context, Progress to Date, and Prospects for the Future," University of South Florida, July 21, 2008. <http://usf.usfca.edu/law/academic/journals/lawreview/printissues/v42i4/SAN402.pdf> (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹²⁸ Rina Bhattacharya and Hirut Wolde, "Constraints on Trade in the MENA Region," International Monetary Fund, February 2010. <http://cid.bcrp.gob.pe/biblio/papers/imf/2010/febrero/wp1031.pdf> (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹²⁹ Mustapha Kamel Nabli, "Middle East and North Africa: Recent Economic Developments and Prospects," Islamic Development Bank, May 11, 2008. (accessed July 2, 2014). <http://www.isdb.org/irj/go/km/docs/documents/IDBDevelopments/Internet/English/IDB/CM/Publications/EconomicLectureSeries/Nabli-Lecture-02.pdf> (accessed July 2, 2014).

promoting FDI throughout MENA, allowing for vital job creation in developing Member States through the financing of small to medium businesses.¹³⁰

Actions Taken by the United Nations

The United Nations and the LAS have been working closely together to achieve the Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs) in all Member States.¹³¹ The need to eradicate extreme poverty, promote gender equality, provide universal primary education, and establish global partnerships for development represent a few examples of how MDGs are necessary to successfully establishing an environment where international trade relations can be cultivated.¹³² To this end, resolution no. 365 was implemented by the LAS at the 19th Arab Summit held in March of 2007, calling for an Arab Economic and Social Development Summit to be held biannually.¹³³ The first summit commenced in Kuwait on January 19, of 2009, signaling a new shift towards Arab social and economic integration for all Member States by allowing the private sector and civil society to play a crucial role in the development process.¹³⁴ Initiatives were passed to provide the funding for the development of small & medium business enterprises, combat the poverty and unemployment which have plagued many resource poor Member States, and remove the barriers to private investment which have existed.¹³⁵ The state of gender equality, youth empowerment, education, and food and water security were also discussed with the commitment of cooperation between governments and civil society organizations being promoted extensively.¹³⁶ This collaboration continued into the second summit with the Third Arab Report on the achievement of MDGs composed by the LAS, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) providing a basis to which developmental success could be measured.¹³⁷ Projects like the inter-Arab railway and Arab Customs Union were revisited, and the Kuwaiti initiative for funding small and medium Arab enterprises was implemented.¹³⁸ The third summit was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 2013, where the initial goals of the Economic and Social Development summits continued to fuel the proposed initiatives, including achieving the MDGs, promoting inter-Arab trade and investment, and creating an Arab Customs Union and Free trade Zone.¹³⁹ With a new era of cooperation between Member States and CSOs being evident through the assisted works of the UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, and UNESCWA the economic and social reforms necessary to foster international trade are now taking place throughout MENA.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁰ Edward Burke and Sara Bazoobandi, "The Gulf takes charge in the MENA region," FRIDE Thinktank, April 2010. http://www.fride.org/download/WP_Gulf_MENA_ENG_Apr10.pdf (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹³¹ *The Arab Millennium Development Goals Report*. The United Nations and League of Arab States, 2013. http://www.escwa.un.org/information/publications/edit/upload/E_ESCWA_EDGD_13_1_E.pdf (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹³² Ibid

¹³³ "Arab Economic and Social Development Summit Kuwait, 19-20 January 2009," Egyptian State Information Service, <http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Templates/Articles/tmpArticles.aspx?CatID=404#.U81Z7fldWVJ> (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹³⁴ "Kuwait Declaration of the Arab Economic Summit," State of Kuwait, http://www.da.gov.kw/eng/articles/arab_economic_summit_2009_speeches.php?p=summit_declaration (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ "Helen Clark: Remarks Arab Social and Development Summit," United Nations Development Programme, January 19, 2011. <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/speeches/2011/01/19/helen-clark-remarks-arab-social-and-development-summit/> (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹³⁸ "Arab Economic and Social Development Summit held in Egypt," Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, January 19, 2011. http://www.saudiembassy.net/latest_news/news01191101.aspx (accessed July 2, 2014).

¹³⁹ "Riyadh Declaration on Conclusion of 3rd Arab Economic and Social Development Summit," Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (accessed July 12, 2014). <http://www.mofa.gov.sa/sites/mofaen/ServicesAndInformation/news/MinistryNews/Pages/ArticleID201312215637250.aspx>

¹⁴⁰ Adnan Badran and Moneef R. Zou'bi, "Arab States: UNESCO Science Report 2010," United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2010. http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SC/pdf/sc_usr10_arab_states_EN.pdf (accessed July 12, 2014).

Conclusion

The LAS has continuously worked, from its inception, to strengthen and expand the economies of all Member States by integrating trade throughout MENA.¹⁴¹ Through the formation of several intra-regional agreements and trading blocs, international trade has been fostered through trade liberalization multilaterally, bilaterally, and regionally.¹⁴² Challenges have also been prevalent throughout the trade liberalization process; illustrated by non-transparent governance, high levels of unemployment, a weak private sector, and regional conflicts.¹⁴³ With the establishment of a GAFTA, Member States have contributed significantly to achieving the ultimate goal of a truly free Arab trade area by promoting fair and standardized tariff duties and encouraging investment.¹⁴⁴

Outside of MENA, Member States are engaged in several preferential trade agreements around the globe.¹⁴⁵ The EU currently represents the most significant trading partner with MENA, comprising more than 60% of total trade annually for some Member States.¹⁴⁶ The US has FTA with four Member States, trades heavily with the members of the GCC, and supports Member States through the processes of WTO accession.¹⁴⁷ Russia, India, and China are projected to become the fastest growing trading partners with MENA, representing new economic opportunities throughout the region.¹⁴⁸ Additionally, Intra-regional trade has not reached its full potential, representing a primary focus for the LAS in strengthening international trade relations.¹⁴⁹ Member States must continue to diversify their export base, improve the living standards of their citizens, provide the infrastructure necessary for future trade, and enact the economic and social policy changes necessary to ensure their competitiveness in the global marketplace.

To accelerate the successful implementation of the MDGs throughout MENA, the LAS has taken a progressive step in providing a platform for the UN, Member States, and CSOs to work together in changing the economic and social landscapes within the region through Arab Economic and Social Development summits. Through this medium, the failures of the past have been brought to light, and new solutions to achieving the social and economic reforms necessary to encourage international trade have been devised. The goal of a unified Arab Customs Union is continuously nearing realization as inter-Arab trade and investment grows, human capital is cultivated, and living standards rise throughout MENA.

Committee Directive

The directive of this committee is to examine the current state of Arab economies and international trade relations, while considering how to further strengthen economic ties intra-regionally and globally. How can new trade relations be cultivated without the consequence of trade diversion? How can resource poor and resource rich Member States equally benefit from new trade agreements? How can nations with historic natural resource specializations, including Member States with an abundant unskilled labor force, diversify their export base? How can your Member State encourage economic participation for all citizens, specifically women and youth? Delegates should thoroughly examine the history of international trade relations and economic progression throughout MENA. This includes attaining a working knowledge of the multi-lateral and bilateral FTAs that are

¹⁴¹ Javad Abedini, Nicolas Peridy, "The Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA): An Estimation of the Trade Effects," Canadian Economics Association, 2007, <http://economics.ca/2007/papers/0300.pdf> (accessed July 12, 2014).

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ "US-Middle East Free Trade Coalition Discussion with USTR On a New MENA Trade & Investment Partnership Initiative," National Foreign Trade Council, http://www.nftc.org/default/Publications/Trade_Policy/2011%20Middle%20East%20and%20AF%20Trade%20NFTC%20US%20MEFTA.pdf (accessed July 12, 2014).

¹⁴⁴ "Greater Arab Free Trade Agreement," Ministry of Industry & Trade The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, <http://mit.gov.jo/Default.aspx?tabid=732> (accessed July 12, 2014).

¹⁴⁵ "League of Arab States' Regional Integration: Opportunities for Trade and Employment," International Trade Centre, http://legacy.intracen.org/marketanalysis/docs/Newsletters/LAS-Opportunities_for_Trade_and_Employment_Executive_Summary.pdf (accessed July 12, 2014).

¹⁴⁶ Maria Dolores Parra Robles, "The Impact of FTAs on MENA Trade," University Jaume I, <http://www.univ-orleans.fr/leo/infer/PARRA%201.pdf> (accessed July 12, 2014).

¹⁴⁷ Rebecca M. Nelson, Mary Jane Bolle, and Shayerah Ilias, "U.S. Trade and Investment in the Middle East and North Africa: Overview and Issues for Congress" Congressional Research Service, January 20, 2012, <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/183739.pdf> (accessed July 12, 2014).

¹⁴⁸ "MENA trade with Russia, India and China set to grow fastest through to 2020," Open Society Foundation for South Africa, February 22, 2012, <http://www.safpi.org/news/article/2012/mena-trade-russia-india-and-china-set-grow-fastest-through-2020> (accessed July 12, 2014).

¹⁴⁹ "League of Arab States' Regional Integration: Opportunities for Trade and Employment," International Trade Centre, http://legacy.intracen.org/marketanalysis/docs/Newsletters/LAS-Opportunities_for_Trade_and_Employment_Executive_Summary.pdf (accessed July 12, 2014).

currently in effect, as well as the FTAs that are being pursued. It is paramount for each delegate to remember the sovereign nature of their own governance while considering the unique political, social, and economic status of each Member State. How can your Member State maintain its cultural and religious heritage, while enacting positive economic and social changes? Considering the relevance of infrastructural and social development to encouraging international trade, delegates should also consider their Member States current status in achieving the MDGs. How can your Member State openly engage dialogue with their citizens, and CSOs, in enacting these economic and social changes?

Technical Appendix Guide

Topic I: Ensuring Political Processes in Conflict Situations

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. General Assembly. 15 September 1995.

http://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/pdfs/Beijing_Declaration_and_Platform_for_Action.pdf

Though this framework deals specifically with women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, delegates may find this useful for coming up with solutions for involvement for all minorities within their Member States. Pages 181 through 209 deals with women in power and decision making, and institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women. Delegates may draw inspiration for means of ensuring the political process for women, and minorities.

“Electoral Assistance.” United Nations Department of Political Affairs.

<http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/undpa/main/issues/elections>

Though Member States may not chose to use the electoral assistance that the United Nations can offer, delegates may look towards this body as an example of how to better monitor and protect elections. It also offers links to information in peacemaking, and peacebuilding, which can help to protect and ensure the political processes. As ensuring these processes is of the upmost importance, delegates will want to find examples of successful means of protecting the process from start to finish, and this may be at least a starting place for delegates to find examples of those successful protections.

“Global Issues: Women and Democracy.” United Nations.

<http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/democracy/women.shtml>

While quoted in the background guide for various explanations on democracy, this site gives suggestions for effective political participation of women, though the suggestions could also be used for any other group that often finds itself disfranchised, or not included from the political process. For those Member States who seek to find better ways of creating a much more open election for its citizens, delegates may draw inspiration from the suggestions listed here. It also lists what various Member States, including a few within the LAS, are already doing to be more inclusive of women in the political process.

Huntington, Samuel P.. Democracy’s Third Wave. University of Oklahoma Press. 1991.

<http://www.ou.edu/uschina/gries/articles/IntPol/Huntington.91.Demo.3rd.pdf>

Noted political scientist Samuel P. Huntington wrote this essay on the rapid democratization in the early 1990s as a result of the fall of the Soviet Union. Huntington writes on things such as the external forces that came together to create democracies in places that had previously been under totalitarian control, and why it spread so rapidly. More importantly, delegates should focus on the section called “A Third Reverse Wave?” that talks about setbacks to democracy, and governmental transitions within Member States that vote. If the committee can identify and combat the causes of why democracies fail, often things that cause conflict and civil unrest such as “severe economic setbacks” and “social and political polarization,” they are more able to protect the political processes mentioned within the background guide.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. General Assembly. 23 March 1976.

<http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights exists as an international framework for political processes for global citizens. Only seven Member States are signatories to these document, though all Member States extend at least women the right to vote. Delegates may want to examine what aspects of this document their Member State disagrees with, and perhaps the committee as a whole may come up with a region-wide framework for protection of civil and political rights, or use it to understand what is expected as a member of the international community.

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. International IDEA. <http://www.idea.int/>

International IDEA is an organization that frequently works with the United Nations doing exactly as their name suggests, assisting with democracy and electoral assistance. The IDEA has worked with Egypt and Morocco, and currently has initiatives in Tunisia and Jordan, though its efforts are international in scope. Delegates may look at what has been done within LAS Member States to create something a regional body similar to the IDEA, or to create frameworks that help to do the same kinds of things within the committee’s members.

“Middle East and North Africa.” International Foundation for Electoral Systems.

<http://www.ifes.org/Content/Projects/Middle-East-and-North-Africa.aspx>

The IFES is another organization that has done work in LAS Member States within the political process. As with other organizations, delegates may use this as examples of how various political processes have been aided by a third party. Projects by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems range from assistance with women’s leadership to elections support and violence risk assessments. Many examples of how to better protect the political process can be found here, and ideas may inspire delegates to better protect those processes within their home Member States.

The United Nations Democracy Fund. United Nations. <http://www.un.org/democracyfund/>

The United Nations Democracy Fund was established to help Member States attempting to democratize, both in transition and other phases of the process. With nearly 500 projects across the international community, the UNDEF gives grants to projects aimed at democracy, especially those projects that deal with various aspects of the political process. Included throughout the website is a database of projects in which the UNDF has assisted. Delegates in Member States struggling with a transition may use the UNDF as a source in working papers, or delegates may use the UNDF’s projects as starting points for ideas for how to better protect political processes for women and youth, or other various projects with which UNDF has worked.

Topic II: Strengthening and Expanding Arab Economies: Encouragement of International Trade Relations

Alonso-Gamo, Patricia, Annalisa Fedelino, and Sebastian Paris Horvitz, “Globalization and Growth Prospect in Arab Countries,” International Monetary Fund, September 1997.

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/wp97125.pdf>

Although this report was prepared in 1997, its contents still reflect relevant issues to discussing economic prosperity and international trade relations in Arab nations. It provides a broad explanation on how globalization has progressed throughout history, as well as striking foresight into how the region has adapted to a more global economic system. Delegates may find pages 10 - 17 useful in understanding the integration progress made before the full enforcement of GAFTA. Pages 29 – 38 are significant because they outline the obstacles to integration which existed before the establishment of the MDGs, but more importantly, they still reflect the infrastructural and policy reform needs of many LDCs within the LAS.

“Arab Human Development Report 2009: Challenges to Human Security in the Arab Countries.” United Nations Development Programme (2009) <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/ahdr/ahdr2009e.pdf>

The Arab Human Development Report is presented by the UNDP, but it is not a direct reflection of the UNDP or the United Nations official viewpoint on any of the subjects addressed. It is created based upon two years of research by prominent Arab scholars, advisers, leadership figures, and citizens. Within this report, delegates will find an extensive discussion on nearly every aspect of human development. Although human security and development are a main concern in establishing a stable economic environment, delegates should review pages 99-118 for specific information concerning economic security. This section may help delegates in better understanding some of the economic policies which could be discussed in relation to economic stability, income equality, poverty reduction, and the development of human capital.

Behar, Alberto and Caroline Freund, “The Trade Performance of the Middle East and North Africa,” The World Bank, July 2011. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMENA/Resources/WP53.pdf>

This paper summarizes the trade performance of MENA over a 15 year period. Delegates may find this paper useful in visualizing the statistical data to which many of the sources in this guide relate through their synopsis of the current economic trends in MENA. There are many documents that provide aggregate trade volumes using descriptive analysis and gravity models, but this document represents a comprehensive and readily available source. It includes non-petroleum and petroleum exports and imports, including individual data for 16 Member States. The descriptions explain potential growth in different industries, which will give a more detailed picture as to how MENA has not taken full advantage of its opportunities for economic advancement.

Civil Society and Civic Engagement in the Arab States Region. United Nations Development Programme. 2013. http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/results/english/Results-CSO-ArabStates_E-7Feb2013.pdf

This report outlines the need for CSOs and civic engagement throughout the Arab States. It outlines the UNDPs approach in promoting civic engagement, as well as giving the positive result of its endeavors in the region thus far. Delegates will find this document useful in understanding how CSOs can positively affect unemployment and poverty in their Member State by supporting human development.

Eid, Florence and Fiona Paua. "Foreign Direct Investment in the Arab World: The Changing Investment Landscape." World Economic Forum (2002)

http://www.weforum.org/pdf/Global_Competitiveness_Reports/Reports/AWCR_2002_2003/FDI.pdf

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has historically represented only a small fraction of the economic growth for many Member States of the LAS. With that in mind, the need to encourage FDI has been a major topic of discussion. This report gives a brief history of FDI in the Arab World and then concentrates on the characteristics of FDI over a 15 year period, 1985-2000 respectively. Delegates may find this report helpful in understanding FDI, but more particularly in considering how to encourage FDI within their Member State. A large portion of the contents are devoted to promoting FDI and discussing the changing investment climate within MENA.

Fuchs, Peter. "Moving Ahead from Doha to Cancun: The WTO Discussions in the Arab Countries", Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Berlin, September 2003. <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/global/02034.pdf>

This briefing provides an insightful look into the process of WTO accession, and more specifically the obstacles facing Member States who seek inclusion. Delegates will find that some of the issues facing Member States in 2003 are still true to this day, for example the so called "Singapore Issues". Member States seeking WTO accession will find this document helpful.

Gelil, Ibrahim Abdel. "The Sustainable Development Initiative in the Arab Region: Third Progress Report." League of Arab States (2011). <http://css.escwa.org.lb/sdipd/1545/3rd.pdf>

The Sustainable Development Initiative in the Arab Region (SDIAR) emerged from the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Development in Cairo, 2001. It is considered as a structure for cooperation between developing nations, CSOs, and the private sector in achieving sustainable development. This report summarizes the progress that has been made by international organizations, committees and initiatives that collaborate to encourage sustainable development under SDIARs framework. The action plan for implementing SDIAR was created jointly by the United Nations Environment Programme, African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment, League of Arab States, and Economic and Social Commission for West Africa. Delegates will find a wealth of knowledge pertaining to the progress made throughout MENA in achieving sustainable development. This information can be tied directly to their research into encouraging economic growth and international trade relations, as the international community is invested in the sustainable development of Arab nations. Pages 44-47 are of particular significance to delegates, containing information on WTO accession, trade, FDI, and globalization in the Arab region.

"The Millennium Development Goals in the Arab Region 2007: A Youth Lens." The United Nations and League of Arab States. 2007. <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/publications/edit/upload/ead-07-3-e.pdf>

This report was prepared by the United Nations agencies operating within MENA, and the League of Arab States. It provides a midpoint review between the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the target deadline of 2015. The eight MDGs are addressed regionally and sub-regionally with a special emphasis placed on the issues facing youth ages 15 to 24, which is a rapidly growing demographic in Arab nations. Delegates may find this report helpful in formulating ideas to promote job creation, education, intra-regional cooperation, and the economic and social rights which are necessary for sustained economic growth within their Member State.